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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SPANISH DETENTION OF ARGENTINE
EX-PRESIDENT ISABELITA PERON

REF: MADRID 15

¶1. (U) Following the arrest in Spain of accused Argentine death squad leader Rodolfo Almiron on December 28 (ref A), Spanish police briefly detained Argentine ex-president Maria Estela Martinez (aka Isabelita Peron) on January 12. The police acted on a warrant issued by Argentine magistrate Raul Acosta, who accuses Peron of signing three presidential decrees in 1975-76 that allowed the armed forces and security services to "disappear" people. The 75-year-old Peron appeared before the National Court where Judge Juan del Olmo conditionally released her - at the request of the prosecutor's office - pending a decision on extradition. She must report to the police every two weeks. Argentine authorities have 40 days to formally request Peron's extradition.

¶2. (U) On January 15, the Argentine judge who is processing the Almiron case issued a second warrant against Peron, accusing her of responsibility for the Triple A death squads that Almiron led. Judge Del Olmo is scheduled to rule on that case on January 22. Peron has lived in Madrid since ¶1981.

Aguirre